Serial No. 09/788,540

IN THE CLAIMS

The text of all pending claims, (including withdrawn claims) is set forth below. Cancelled and not entered claims are indicated with claim number and status only. The claims as listed below show added text with underlining and deleted text with strikethrough. The status of each claim is indicated with one of (original), (currently amended), (cancelled), (withdrawn), (new), (previously presented), or (not entered).

Please **AMEND** claims 1-6 and **ADD** new claim 9 in accordance with the following:

1.   (CURRENTLY AMENDED) A client/server system comprising:
a server, comprising:
        software to generate operating instructions for ana client-side I/O device;
        a device driver to generate a control signal for the client-side I/O device based on the operating instructions; and
        a virtual I/O port to transmit the control signal for the client-side I/O device and to receive an I/O event from the client-side I/O device; and
        a client in communication with the client-side I/O device, comprising:
        a device handler to receive the control signal from the virtual I/O port in the server, to control the client-side I/O device that is coupled with the client based on the control signal received from the virtual I/O port in the server, and to transmit the I/O event received from the client-side I/O device to the virtual I/O port in the server.

2.   (CURRENTLY AMENDED) The client/server system according to claim 1,
wherein the device driver in the server controls the client-side I/O device via ana client-side I/O port on the client, and
wherein the virtual I/O port in the server provides the device driver in the server with an interface having the same function as the client-side I/O port by transmitting the control signal for the client-side I/O device from the device driver in the server to the device handler in the client and informing the device driver in the server of the I/O event received from the client-side I/O device via the client-side I/O port.

2

Serial No. 09/788,540

3.   (CURRENTLY AMENDED) A server, comprising:

software to generate operating instructions for ~~an~~ a client-side I/O device coupled with a client;

a device driver to generate a control signal for the client-side I/O device based on the operating instructions; and

a virtual I/O port to transmit the control signal from the device driver in the server to a client-side device handler of the client, which is in communication with the client-side I/O device, and to receive from the device handler an I/O event received from the client-side I/O device.

4.   (CURRENTLY AMENDED) A client, comprising:

a device handler to control ~~an~~ a client-side I/O device coupled with the client based on a control signal received from a virtual I/O port on the server, ~~which~~ the control signal generated by a device driver ~~on a~~ in the server based on operating instructions generated by software on the server, and to transmit an I/O event received from the client-side I/O device to the virtual I/O port in the server.

5.   (CURRENTLY AMENDED) The client according to claim 4, further comprising:

at least one client-side I/O port, which is coupled with the client-side I/O device, and which is controlled by the device driver in the server.

6.   (CURRENTLY AMENDED) The client/server system of claim 1, wherein the client-side I/O device is a bar code reader.

7.   (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) The client/server system of claim 1, wherein the client and server communicate via a LAN.

8.   (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) The client/server system of claim 1, wherein the client and server communicate via the WWW.

3

9.   (NEW) A client/server system comprising:

a client comprising:

at least one I/O device, and

a programmed computer processor handling data communication, including an I/O event from the at least one I/O device, via an I/O port connected to the at least one I/O device; and

a server communicably connectable with the client and comprising:

a programmed computer processor handling data communication, including directly controlling the at least one I/O device of the client and handling the I/O event from the at least one I/O device of the client, via a virtual I/O port in the server to the at least one I/O device of the client.

4